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COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE

Seventh session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 103rd MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 21 November 1991, at 11 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. VOYAME

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The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 19 OF THE CONVENTION (agenda item 4) (continued)

Initial report of Uruguay (CAT/C/5/Add.27) (continued)

1. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Chabén (Uruguay) took a seat at the Committee table.

2. Mr. CHABEN (Uruguay) apologized for the fact that his delegation was as yet unable to reply to the many detailed questions put to it by the Committee. He therefore requested that his Government should be allowed to give its replies in the form of an additional report to be submitted to the Committee at its next session.

3. Mr. GIL LAVEDRA (Country Rapporteur), supported by Mr. DIPANDA MOUELLE (Alternate Country Rapporteur), said that it would be to the Committee's advantage to agree to that request. It might also be possible for the Government of Uruguay to obtain assistance from the Centre for Human Rights in drafting the additional report.

4. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the delegation of Uruguay to rule 66 of the Committee's rules of procedure, which read: "... The Committee may also inform a State party from which it decides to seek further information that it may authorize its representative to be present at a specified meeting. Such a representative should be able to answer questions which may be put to him by the Committee and make statements on reports already submitted by his State, and may also submit additional information from his State".

5. The principle was that the members of the Committee should be able to have their questions answered immediately. Moreover, all States parties should be treated equally. The delegations of other States parties had replied to very detailed questions by the members of the Committee, nearly always on the day those questions had been asked. It was understandable that diplomats could not provide such replies, and that was why the Committee expected a representative such as the Attorney-General or a judge to come from the capital of the State party to appear before it.

6. The Committee had already agreed to a waiver of that rule for Uruguay and the delegation was now requesting another. Moreover, the Government of Uruguay had not submitted its initial report on time. Since Uruguay's first periodic report was due in June 1992, he suggested that it should be submitted earlier so that the Committee could discuss it at its April 1992 session.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 a.m. and resumed at 11.45 a.m.

7. Mr. SORENSEN said it was important that the replies of the representatives of States parties should be given while the questions were still fresh in the minds of the members of the Committee who had put them. Since three members of the Committee would not be seeking re-election at the

end of 1991, he suggested that, instead of sending an additional report, the Government of Uruguay should transmit its replies in one week's time. The secretariat could forward the replies to the present members of the Committee for their written comments. The Government of Uruguay could then submit its first periodic report at the scheduled time.

8. Mr. GIL IAVEDRA asked whether a week was enough time for the Government of Uruguay to provide complete answers and all the material requested by the Committee.

9. Mr. CHABEN (Uruguay) said that, although a week was a rather short time his Government would endeavour to comply with the Committee's request. He thanked the members of the Committee for their indulgence.

10. The CHAIRMAN said he assumed that the members of the Committee agreed to the course suggested by Mr. Sorensen. The Committee could then make its recommendations on the initial report of Uruguay at its April 1992 session, to which a representative of Uruguay would be invited. The Government of Uruguay might also submit its first periodic report at that time.

11. It was so decided.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

12. The CHAIRMAN paid a tribute to the outgoing members of the Committee, Ms. Chanet, Ms. Díaz Palacios and Mr. Perlas.

13. After an exchange of courtesies, he declared the session closed.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.